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his lips for a moment, contrasting strangely with the deep gloom of his brow. The very heart of the smith died within him. The stranger replaced his pistols; and walking slowly to the door of the hut, looked forth into the night. It was dark and gloomy; the moon had not yet risen; the clouds were gathering together in shapeless and heavy masses above the tops of the lofty mountains; and the wind came by with that moaning and melancholy sound which forebodes a coming storm.

"In an hour," said he, "the moon will rise; till then I will remain here; and, at twelve to-night, you shall see me again."

So saying he closed the door, fastened his horse to the wall, and, wrapping himself in his cloak, sat down on a stone bench opposite the fire; the smith took his at some distance, and both relapsed into perfect silence. At length the moon appeared struggling with the huge and shadowy masses of clouds that racked along the sky. The stranger again looked forth into the night; then turning to his horse, tightened the girths, and led him to the door. The smith watched him in silence. The stranger, before he mounted, again turned slowly towards him, fixing his eyes upon him with that strange expression I have already endeavoured to describe. The wretched smith hid his face in his hands, nor did he stir until the sound of the horse's hoofs, as they rang hollowly on the frosty ground, assured him that the stranger was gone. He watched him as long as he was in sight, his tall dark figure still taller and darker in the moonlight, as his horse strode at a rapid pace along the mountain road. At length he disappeared in the distance, and the smith returned to his hut. He closed and barred the door, accumulating every possible fastening with the quick and nervous haste of one under the influence of overpowering fear; but suddenly stopping—"Och! its all of no use—and, sure, I know it: I might as well strive to keep out the wind;" with that he sat or rather sank down on the seat he had left.

The traveller meanwhile was pursuing his road, and had reached the top of the mountain; he reined his horse, and cast his eyes around; the prospect was wild and dreary to the last degree: a wide extent of barren and uninhabitable bog lay on either side of the road, its monotonous uniformity broken only by patches of snow or piles of rocks; lofty mountains of the same cheerless and dreary character occupied the distance; and the only vestige of human habitation was a ruined and roofless cabin, which stood by the road side, at a short distance; its low black walls scarcely distinguishable even in the moonlight from the bog, of which they had once been a part. The traveller drew his right hand pistol from the holster, cocked it, and, gathering up the reins, proceeded at a slow and steady pace, keeping a watchful eye upon the ruined hut, yet not so as to attract attention. As he passed the door a man sprang into the road: he had a blunderbuss in his hand; but, while he was actually in the spring, the traveller laid him dead at his feet. He replaced his pistol, and deliberately alighted from his horse. The moon had broken from between the clouds, and was shining bright and clear; he turned the dead man on his back; the pale, clear light fell full upon his face; his eyes were fixed and staring; and, though he expired without a groan, the parting pang had left a horrible expression on his livid features. The stranger bent over his victim; his dusky form and sallow brow half in light, half in shade: he gazed on him intently; and as he looked, he laughed until the very rocks rang back to the echo of his ghastly mirth. He left the dead man where he lay, and, remounting his horse, returned to Kilworth: it was almost twelve when he again reached the inn. He knocked loudly and long; at length the door opened.

"Where is your master?" said he to the waiter.

"In bed, Sir, these two hours."

"Call him," said the stranger, "I must see him instantly."

There was something of mockery in his tone as he spoke.

"I durst not," said the waiter, evidently disconcerted; "I could not rouse him now for any one."

"You are right, friend," said the stranger. "It will take a louder voice than your's to waken him now; but,

if you have a mind to try your skill, you will find him on the top of yonder mountain. So saying, he turned his horse from the door, leaving the waiter rivetted to the spot. Of the rest of that fatal night nothing is known: in the morning the body was found, and a warrant was issued for the apprehension of the smith, but his forge was closed—his cabin deserted—and he was heard of in that quarter no more. I myself have seen that ill-omened forge; it is in ruins. The grey-headed peasant who pointed it out told me the singular story I have related: he remembered well the very night. When he had done he lowered his voice, and, by way of making his assurance doubly sure, tendered an unbidden though solemn oath, that he himself had often heard, when passing that spot in the deep gloom of a winter night, the clang of sledge and anvil sounding from the RUINED FORGE.

November 29, 1834.

H. J. B.

#### LIFE IN AMERICA.

It is not customary in New York to give dinners; from economical motives, the houses are so arranged as not to admit of it. When the homely family meal is over, and they have duly picked their teeth, the men continue to sit and drink, but the females withdraw to their bed-room, and commence their potations. At this time they admit no visitors, unless, perhaps, most intimate friends of their own sex. The answer then given is, "that the ladies are asleep," which means, that they wish not to be disturbed while they secretly indulge in spirituous liquors, and smoke their cigars. Social parties, not having a political tendency, are not to the taste of the Americans: the restraints which decorum imposes in such companies are absolutely incompatible with their notions of liberty. In the great seaports, and in Washington, there are occasionally tea-parties: from national vanity, people sometimes submit to this trouble, in order to give foreigners a high opinion of the extreme refinement of manners and the high polish of the Americans. A few days after my introduction to the reverend doctor, I received an invitation to such a party.

Whenever a lady entered, all the gentlemen at once offered her their seats with low bows; and each person on entering shook hands with all present, who then waited in profound silence till the party was complete. The mistress of the house then counted her guests, and began to prepare tea. During tea, fish, cakes, smoked meat, and fruit were eaten promiscuously, and washed down with every sort of wine and liquors. The feasting over, the married ladies seated themselves together; the men slunk away to the windows and other corners, shuffled about with their feet, slowly crossed their legs, and at length assumed their favourite position by clapping them against the wall. One or other secretly slipped the beloved quid into their mouths, and began to chew, to spit, and to talk politics in a low tone. The younger females stood in a group in the middle of the room, and inquired of one another, how many quarters each had taken lessons on the piano. Almost every one of them had several school medals, the rewards of diligence in the different departments of learning, hanging round her neck from long and broad ribands: the mothers explained to one another the purport of these decorations, and when that subject was exhausted, they took up the absolutely inexhaustible topic of the preceding Sunday's sermon; and this afforded each occasion to display her exquisite sensibility, profound wisdom, and refined morality, which, if they did not entertain the company, at least kept it together till past twelve o'clock. Another group was formed by the young *elegants*. Having taken their pen-knives from their waistcoat pockets, they were trimming their nails, while the young damsels leered coquettishly at them. At length the boldest of them, putting up his knife, and having convinced himself of his amiability by a self-complacent glance at the mirror, and ascertained that his cravat was the stiffest and his waistcoat the whitest, he shuffled in three strides, in which he stumbled only twice, across the carpet to the young ladies, drew a chair to the piano, and with a thousand obeisances invited the damsels to play. The latter set on foot an inquiry, which of them had learned music the longest; it turned out that one of

them had taken eight quarters' lessons, and she was forced to play. 'Yankee Doodle' was the first air, of course: then followed 'Buy a broom,' and lastly, the equally celebrated old French song, 'Ah, vous dis-je, chère maman,' was thrummed. When all the young ladies had played the same tunes, and the daughter of the house, a fine girl of seventeen, had jagged a solo, to which she sang the music herself, while five school-medals flying about gave her many a bruise, till, breathless and exhausted, she was obliged to desist, the company expressed their applause by a general stamping of the feet, and then broke up.

An American city has no other promenade but the streets. On the sabbath all the streets are closed with chains, in order to deprive the inhabitants of the pleasure of walking or riding. In New York alone, they have so far relaxed from this rigid morality, as to leave the chains down for a couple of hours in the day. Games of chance are deemed immoral in this country, and are never tolerated in any company. The sale of playing-cards and dice is prohibited; billiards and draughts are forbidden, and chess is not known; and yet a nation so fond of lucre cannot but be fond of games of chance. The Americans in fact play as deeply as they drink. Faro-banks and billiard-tables, are almost publicly kept; and the inspector and municipal authorities are induced, by a sufficient fee, to wink at the violation of the law. Sometimes, indeed, they take the delinquents by surprise, but when they have pocketed the legal penalty, and what they can squeeze out besides, they are quiet for a while.—*Translated from the "Morgenblatt," by "The Athenæum."*

### THE SPIRIT OF LOUGH DERGART.\*

A LEGEND OF THE SHANNON.

BY EDWARD WALSH.

By Lough Dergart's wave, where rude winds roar,  
A dark spirit dwelt in time of yore;  
And fishermen, fraught with wild affright,  
Still shun the curst haunt of the water-sprite.

For often he lur'd the home-bound skiff  
To the eddy beneath the haunted cliff,  
Where the sailors' last shriek, and the rocks' reply,  
Were blended in air with his fiendish joy.

Full often, beneath his evil eye,  
The 'witch'd herd would fall—the harvest die;  
And death-dealing shafts the fiend would fling,  
As he sported in air on the tempest's wing!

Some horror-fraught deeds of this evil thing,  
No legend would say, no bard would sing;  
For nothing of ruth could round him dwell,  
Who sprung from a witch and a fiend of hell.

His artifice bore to an early tomb,  
A maid in the pride of beauty's bloom:  
I wept o'er her fate long days ago,  
And I'll weave in my lay the tale of wo.

This maiden would oft her pathway take  
To church by the side of that lonely lake;  
And the water-sprite thought, with fell design,  
"O! that I could make yon maiden mine!"

When the sabbath bell toll'd with tone profound—  
Though wicked ones hate the sainted sound—  
He seeks the bless'd fane; and his angel eye  
Of magic would steal a young maiden's sigh.

He shone, a gay knight of noble mien—  
The sedge of the lake, his armour green;  
And the mantle that flow'd o'er his shoulders, he  
Had form'd from down of the willow tree.

He made a light boat of the wild waves' spray,  
To bear to dark doom his fated prey;  
And the long lily-leaves the wide lake bore,  
Were the white-bosom'd sails the bright bark wore.

\* Lough Dergart is a large lake formed by the waters of the Shannon, equidistant between Banagher and Limerick. In a novel called the "Monk," there is a legend much resembling this; but I have given the story exactly as tradition has preserved it among the fishermen that inhabit the banks of Lough Dergart.

The high bounding boat soon leaves the land;  
The helm well obeys the green knight's hand:  
No mortal e'er saw in time gone by,  
A bright bark so brave—such chieftain high.

And thus have I seen some bright barks brave,  
All gallantly glide o'er life's wild wave—  
How dark were the hearts could say my song,  
Of the loud-laughing crew that sail'd along!

He bounds from the well-moor'd bark to shore,  
And God's holy house his feet explore,  
Where matron and maid admired the mien,  
And the blue, laughing eyes of the chieftain green.

He strode up the aisle with stately air,  
And sat him beside his maiden fair;  
When he press'd her white hand, her eyes betray'd,  
And the glow of her cheek, the conquest made.

"My castle is gay in yon lake-girt land,  
Where tall forests wave to the breezes bland:  
Be queen of that isle and mine own for aye—  
To death I'll decline if thou answer 'Nay.'"

She falter'd consent—and the nuptial rite  
Fast bound the fair maid and the elfin knight;  
But the setting sun's gleam o'er blue waves spread,  
Soon lighted the bride to her watery bed!

The fresh'ning gale blew the light boat on,  
The false castle's towers in the distance shone,  
And the falser green knight did thus address  
His bride 'mid the waters' loneliness.

"Some brave barks lightly walk the waves when prosper-  
ing gales pursue,  
And things of life that tread the deck may oft such pas-  
sage rue;  
For things of life in bravest barks may tempt the treach-  
erous main,  
And quit the shore to which no gale may bear them back  
again.

"The wise ones say that dangers deep the smoothest  
waves o'er shade,  
And legends tell that genius dark would sigh for mortal maid:  
If so, thy blissful bridal bed may be the oozy cave—  
A water-sprite the gay green knight to whom the vow you  
gave!

"Yon forests high where breezes sigh, and yonder turrets  
tall,  
Where the mild moon-beam sheds yellow gleam, are potent  
magic all!  
At my command uprose that land, and shone those turrets  
fair;

Lo! from the lake their flight they take, and vanish into air.  
"My own beloved bride! for thee I doff this gay disguise,  
With all my native loveliness now feast thy raptur'd eyes:  
This form uncouth may give thee joy when you're bound  
with potent spell,  
Where gnomes of horrid shape appear, and things of  
darkness dwell!

"Why shriek?—the tie that made us one, no earthly  
power can rend;  
Beneath the deep my court I keep, then let us quick de-  
scend.  
This day of doom, when yearly come, shall view the tall  
bark ride,  
And thou be seen those arms between, thus sink beneath  
the tide."

Then blended the boat with its kindred foam,  
Then sunk the dark sprite to its watery home,  
Then shriek'd the lost maid as her garments white  
For an instant were stay'd by the breeze's flight.

Once every year, by sacred doom,  
A bark o'er the wave is seen to come,  
And the maiden's last shriek is heard to break  
The loneliness of the moon-lit lake.

Ye maidens! beware of false ones' sighs,  
And shun the warm gaze of eager eyes;  
When whispers soft vows some gay green knight,  
Be warn'd by the tale of the water-sprite.